



UA Students Help Working Families Secure \$6 Million in Tax Refunds through SaveFirst Initiative

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More than 150 University of Alabama students traveled statewide during the 2010 tax season to prepare more than 2,900 returns for working families.

As part of this statewide initiative, sponsored by the UA Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility and Impact Alabama, UA students played a critical role in helping secure \$6 million in tax refunds and saving the working families about \$800,000 in commercial tax preparation fees, program organizers report.



Edna Ball (far left) received tax preparation assistance from Impact Alabama staff members Sarah Louise Smith (standing), Paul Sloderbeck and Elizabeth Blair.

Under the supervision of SaveFirst, a nonprofit tax preparation and financial literacy initiative of Impact Alabama, UA students collaborated with 400 additional students from 12 other campuses across the state to assist low-income, working families.

Program organizers say that in total, SaveFirst students assisted more than 3,500 families who claimed \$7 million in refunds and saved approximately \$1 million in commercial preparation fees, a 35 percent increase in families served in the last tax season.

More than 60 UA students enrolled in a service-learning course on poverty taught by Stephen Black, CESR director. This course combined academic coursework with a requirement of service at SaveFirst sites, and enrolled students discussed and reflected on issues such as perceptions and misperceptions of those living in poverty and current policies affecting working families. An additional 40 UA students participated in an accounting service-learning course taught by Lisa McKinney, UA instructor.

***About the UA Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility** – Created in 2005, CESR established campus wide programming supporting the development of projects that nurture social responsibility and reflective, thoughtful citizenship. CESR staff develop – and assist faculty members in developing – service-learning courses that engage community organizations in partnerships designed to both*

enhance academic goals and apply scholarly learning to community issues. The service experiences are integrated into the students' academic curriculum. Learn more about CESR initiatives at www.cesr.ua.edu

About Impact Alabama – *Impact: An Alabama Student Service Initiative is Alabama's first nonprofit organization dedicated to developing and implementing substantive service-learning projects by engaging students and collaborating with select universities and colleges throughout the state. Impact presents a vision of Alabama in which its young citizens understand, appreciate and engage actively in civic and public life – contributing their diverse talents to solve local and state problems, influence public policy and pursue the common good.*

The University of Alabama, a student-centered research university, is experiencing significant growth in both enrollment and academic quality. This growth, which is positively impacting the campus and the state's economy, is in keeping with UA's vision to be the university of choice for the best and brightest students. UA, the state's flagship university, is an academic community united in its commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all Alabamians.

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